/168/

25) Artistic ability and taste.

342 We have mentioned the Indian's skill in the execution of his traditional works. Furthermore, he has artistic taste, as we shall see later (VII - 3). His maloca is a fine work of engineering and art. Harmonious and imposing in its proportions, and with a perfect joining of the beams, it is solidly planted on the ground, defying the storms, with posts of hard wood, all quite regular and admirably aligned.

*192 The yuxta-seri, or bands woven of tucum (in Nheengatú,
286 tapacúras), which the women wear below the knee in order
301 to thicken the legs or as ornaments during dances, are perfect works.

531 The paintings on the stools and the designs with straw of different colors in the baskets and sieves are perfect and pleasant.

*192 The yaxkẽ-waxsóro or cache-sexe (small apron of beads
291 strung on threads of tucum), which the women wear in front when they dance, shows patience, skill, and good taste.

177 The new generation, both of the female and male sex,
291 which has passed through the Mission schools, has learned how to make their clothes; and /169/ they complete them with sufficient taste and trying to follow the fashion that they saw among the civilized of the Rio Negro. Even the boys like to sew and embroider (!).

532 They show a bent for drawing; and they not only draw on the ground, but represent in notebooks what they have seen: animal, objects, school buildings, etc. In the interests of truth, it must be pointed out that, because of their inconstancy, none of them up to now has gone on to perfect himself in drawing.

822 Among the colors, they prefer red and blue, combining this last color with white. And they love very bright colors.

T
M
177
● 286
352

/191 cont./

Due to its simplicity, it is known and produced by all the tribes, although it is called "rede de Makú" /Makú hammock/. Because of this depreciatory name, and mainly because of the present ease of acquiring more durable and economical cotton hammocks from the civilized, it is beginning to lose its acceptance among the Indians of the other tribes and today is found almost solely among the Makú and the tribes without contact with the civilized. The Tukano tell of having learned from the Desãna how to make this type of hammock. They were not able to clarify whether they had previously used the rede-puçá /puçá hammock/, or if they knew the hammock and slept on platforms.

T
177
286
352
513
T
* 192
T
174
177
286

b) Beaten hammock. In Tukano it is called pá-tuké, and in Nheengatú, makíra. It is manufactured with a very simple loom (26).

T
[797]

26. Koch Grünberg (Zwei Jahre, 340) is of the opinion that the loom is of European origin. This opinion seems acceptable to us, and we believe one could say that the form of the "rede batida" /beaten hammock/ as well is not of native origin, but learned from the civilized. This conclusion is confirmed by: 1st, the fact that not many Indian women know how to make the "rede batida"; 2nd, those who presently know how to do it (as is shown by our inquiries) learned it in the Mission schools or from the alumnae of the Mission; 3rd, we know that the Governador of the Capitania de S. José do Rio Negro, Lobo D'Almada, in his economic plan to encourage industry, favored the weaver's trade, aiming at "the making of the cloth needed for the uniforms of the garrison, the colonists, and the Indians who came down, using eighteen looms and ten spinning wheels, with twenty-four spindles each. In 1798 only 157 Indian women were working as spinners"

4: Silva--280 M-4,5 (1947-1958) 1962 SQ19 Tucano SQ19

/191 cont./

174
177
• 286
[797]

/footnote 26 cont./ (A. Cesar Ferreira Reis -- Lobo D'Almada -- Manaos, 1940, p. 35); 4th, in the povoados more in contact with civilization, as well as in the more remote malocas, one never finds the "rede-batida"; /this footnote is continued on the next page in the original source/ but the natives either use only the hammock "de trinta fios" /of thirty threads/ or those bought from the civilized; 5th, it seems that we can discover still another argument, to wit: outside of the Colégio Feminino /Girls School/ of the Salesian Missions, on numerous excursions along rivers and igarapés, in only two povoados did we have an opportunity to see the loom and the work of the "rede-batida," and in the two cases it was a matter of young women who had learned it in the Mission and did it on order from the civilized. Furthermore: the terms of the Tukano language that we have presented in relation to the "rede-batida" result from innumerable inquiries at different times and places, with the more educated alumni of the Mission. It is not a matter of an ordinary nomenclature known and used by all, as one would expect if the "rede-batida" were a primitive industry. Many did not know the terms; others presented improper terms made up for the occasion. As generic terms for the occasion, they sometimes were and sometimes were not understood and accepted by other natives.

[438]

Before there came into being the trade in the present cotton hammocks (called in the region redes-do-Ceará /hammocks from Ceará/), the civilized women of the Rio Negro and some Indian women of the Içana continued to "bater" /to beat/ their hammocks on the primitive looms, as they had learned in the lower Rio Negro. The Salesian Missions in turn try to keep this skill from being lost, and they teach the Indian women of greater ability and skill, not only how to make the

[797]

797 /191 cont./

177 /footnote 26 cont./ "rede-batida," but, by
174 the same process, to make rugs, tablecloths,
• 286 napkins, bags, and other artifacts to suit
modern taste.

*192 /192/ pũ-pá:-tuse nextõ-rĩ, consisting of four rounded sticks
286 connected in a rectangle. Each of their vertical staffs (warp)
352 has two holes through which the horizontal ones pass. The holes are purposely very large, so that with a suitable wedge the distance with regard to the horizontal staffs can be varied and thus hammocks of different lengths obtained.

The warp is made in the vertical direction (around the horizontal crossbars, the separation of which marks the length of the hammock), some turns going around with quite a long thread. The vertical crossbars of the loom determine the width of the hammock.

In between the vertical threads the woman starts developing the woof, a small stick with the rolled thread serving as a shuttle, wa'mẽ-kõ dõxká, and beating with a straightedge, pá:-turi-phĩ, in order to join the meshes well. The result is a true fabric of quite tight meshes, and the more elegant and comfortable the hammocks, the finer the thread.

They complete the elegance with a "veranda," pũ-ghõ so'mũ-tõrĩ or pá:-tuke-wári, or a side fringe of varied form, as macramé is made.

The veranda is prepared by stretching a thread of a size corresponding to that of the hammock. Along this thread are tied with knots the tucum fibers folded in half. With these variously colored fibers, the woman spins, without the help of bobbins, but only with the fingers, a somewhat wide lace "ponto" /stitch/, until she obtains a trimming /193/ of some 10 or 15 centimeters, and she afterwards tears the ends with the ouriço /prickly part/ of the piquiá. They not only use fibers
[237] of different colors, but they even attach to them nowadays
[531] beautiful and colorful feathers of birds, in conformity with the taste of the caboclos of the Rio Negro.

/193 cont./

*192
• 286
352
*[115]
[797]

c) Puçá hammock. In Tukano one says pũ piõke; we call it puçá hammock because it is similar, in the knots, to the fishing nets called puçá in the Lingua Geral (27).

27. Pe. Ezequiel Lopes tells that around 1931, among the little Pirá-tapúya Indians from the river Papurí who came to enroll as boarding-school students at the Iauareté school (river Uaupés), some appeared equipped with the puçá type of sleeping hammock.

In order to make this type of hammock, one uses a loom somewhat different from what we have seen previously. It consists of two pairs of vertical staffs, with the small separation of one span more or less. A more variable space lies between one pair and another and marks the length of the hammock desired.

Two threads are stretched horizontally, at a distance of 3 to 4 centimeters apart. Between them the woman starts to make knots or stitches like those of a casting net. They stretch two more threads horizontally, and new stitches are interlaced with the first ones, and so on successively.

This type of hammock is perhaps more work than the "beaten" one. The Tukano call it pũ pỹõke, because the line is run through, piõ: and the knot is made by hand.

227
284
*[192]

3) Fishing nets (puçá).

The Tukano call them wehẽ-kõ (28)

28. The Salesian Missionary Pe. Eduardo Lagório makes the following observation: "The verb to kill, wehẽ, is interesting: it is used almost exclusively to indicate the death of fish and animals. For human beings, having almost no violent murders, they use the expressions related to the various methods of poisoning."

/193 cont./

*192 because of their purpose, which is to kill the fish (wehẽ means
227 to kill), and in the Lingua Geral, puçá. It is a mesh of knots
284 made out of fibers of caroatá (Bromélia pinguis, Lin.), caroá (Neoglazióvia variegáta Ar. Com.), or even tucum. The meshes are narrower or wider, according to the purpose.

[462] They are manufactured by the man. The pregnant woman
[784] cannot touch them, because the fishing would be fruitless. When they prepare their puçá, the men will remain silent, in order to have luck with the fishing.

They perform the work in two ways: either with successive knots, as the casting nets are prepared among the civilized; or using splinters of arumã /Ischnosiphon ovatus, Kcke./, tying them at intervals with caroatá knots, as if one were preparing /194/ a basket. Once this is ready, they take off the splinters and the caroatá knots present the desired net.

They manufacture them in two sizes: a larger one (jereré in Nheengatú), with the shape of a very wide funnel; it measures 1.5 meters or more in length and during the fishing is kept open by means of two poles tied at the ends, in such a way that, with the help of a third pole as a wedge, it almost forms a circle.

They also make smaller and funnel-shaped nets, ganapão /workman, porter/ type, fitted to a hoop equipped with a handle, such as are used to catch butterflies. It is with these that they catch the fish stupefied by the timbo.

It seems that all the men know how to weave their fishing nets, with the exception of the young men of the last generation.

4) Other woven products.

• 286 With the fibers of tucum or miritĩ they make those elegant
301 bands, yuxtá-seri, that they put on the legs (conf. VII -- 3, d
*[192] (1)).

With these same fibers or with twisted embira they prepare some of the dance ornaments that must support the beautiful plumage.

They use monkey hide in order to make braids, which they wear as dance ornaments.

/194 cont./

• 286 531 In woven work as well as in plaited work they combine elements of various colors, producing very regular and pleasant designs. Due to their regularity and finish, some of their work almost reaches perfection.

*192 d) Basketry and plaited work.

285 [462] [342] [227] For their basketry -- and all this work is executed by men -- the raw material is more varied. They use embira or the liber of some trees, especially that which they call pi'ĩ-karõ-gõ. They use palms, with a simple plaiting of the leaflets, on the walls of the homes and, more rarely, also on the ceilings. They use strips of paxiúba (waxtá), patauá (yumũ), and jacitára (wai-tu, a palm of sarmentose and aerial caulis) for mats (i'mĩ-sa) and fish enclosures (sũxteri-ka). It is with the uambé cipo (mĩ'sĩ) that they manufacture the baskets called aturás and the nassas for fishing. But it is especially the arumã (wõhõ), reduced to strips (wõhõ-phí, that they use the most, because with them they prepare baskets, sieves, and the tipití /manioc press/.

[824] The arumã (Schinosiphon /Ischnosiphon/ ovatus, Kckes., of the family of the Marantaceae) is a plant of "terra firma," but humid, with wide leaves, /195/ the stalk of which may exceed two meters. From it are separated strips, which, after being dried, acquire the yellowish color of our chair cane. When [386] [531] they want to execute their designs, the natives dye the little straws with their vegetable dyes. Sometimes they are colored on only one side, for example, for the designs on the inside of the sieves.

According to the purpose, the width of the meshes and the shape will vary.

For the plaiting, they make the straws quite even; they put them in good order on the ground (or on a mat), and, squatting, steadying them with the feet, they begin to plait with transverse colored or uncolored splints, according to the designs that they intend to make.

/292 cont./

515 They are ignorant of the use of handkerchiefs, cleaning the nose with the fingers, which afterwards are rubbed against some part of the body.

[854] The mother, or another woman, with her own hands, attends to the cleaning of her baby, and afterwards, in order to clean herself, is satisfied with shaking her hand to one side and rubbing it on the ground or against some plant.

3. The arts.

157 In the complex of works that the forest dwellers execute, they not only reveal splendid aptitudes, rare ability, and other qualities already mentioned elsewhere, but also particular artistic tendencies which are begging our civilization for more opportunities to develop (47).

[857] 47. With a knife improvised out of a piece of the metallic binding that goes around the crates of merchandise, the child produces canoes, and now even small airplanes, in wood.

The house that he builds, with all its furnishings, -- stools, ceramics, woven goods, canoes, weapons, hunting and fishing gear, baskets, -- reveal, besides the stability and sturdiness required for the purpose for which they are intended, an over-all harmony, a proportion of the parts, a finish in the details, which give a pleasing impression. In all there is revealed a notable artistic sense which should be considered in detail in its threefold manifestation: woven products, designs, music.

a) Woven products.

286 Among the works of weaving, we have already called to mind the nets /Port. rede, net, hammock/ for sleeping and for fishing. But particularly in the rede batida /beaten hammock/ (which seems to be of European origin) and in the puericueio /a covering that hangs from the waist/, Yaxkẽ Waxsó-ro (see below - d (1)), the native woman shows her artistic taste and skill. In the Yaxkẽ

/292 cont./ In the Yaxkẽ

286 Waxsó-ro there is a beautiful combination of the woven and the strung, using colorful glass beads. One admires in it a pleasing 531 combination of colors, proportion and regularity in the design, and a perfect finishing of the piece. In the woven part the mesh is diagonal. It also presents a combination of colored fibers for the design effect. In the choice of colors, as well as in the finishing, there is revealed good /293/ taste, which makes this weaving a beautiful adornment for the women in the dances. With beads or with colored fibers, the designs are the Greek frets /Port. gregas/ characteristic of these tribes.

6) /sic; b)/ Designs.

532 4) /sic; 1)/ Mural designs. The designs painted on the bark that makes up the walls of the houses do not reveal artistic taste (48).

48. For example, the representation of human figures with the disproportional and shapeless trunk, the neck represented by a vertical stroke, etc.

It is probable that what seems to us scrawling or caricature is the stylization of legendary representations. Accepting this possibility, however, one does not perceive any skill in the strokes. The circumferences are made with perfection. Perhaps through the influence of the civilized, they use a string for this, fixing one of the ends and tying to the other a wooden point which will leave a regular mark, like the point of a compass.

[192] [386] For the mural paintings, they use clay of different colors (principally white, yellow, reddish, bluish), diluted in the latex of Õxtã̃-fĩfmĩ (that is, the sorva, Couma utilis, Mell., and other species), which, after having dried, acquires great stability and resistance to the inclemencies and does not change colors.

/311 cont./

*192
301
562

1) Feminine adornment.

Besides the paintings on the face, breasts, and body as decoration (and not as clothing), as they declare, the women own few objects of adornment:

a) Necklaces. They are of different size, shape, and material. They are made from various seeds, especially a tiny nut, threaded on a tucum fiber, the parakẽ-dá; or also little glass beads, [178] the yax'kẽ-dá; or beads obtained from the civilized, the different shapes, sizes, and colors being combined in various ways. They wear them even outside the dances; they are not, however, of general use, and in Wallace's time they were not used at all (Viagens pelo Amazonas e Rio Negro, p. 630).

b) Bracelets. They are of beads or seeds, like the necklaces, and are called in Tukano, yax'kẽ wã-yãsé.

c) Knee bands (63).

63. Among the Ide-masã of the stream Komé-ya, tributary of the Pirá-paraná, we also saw young men using knee bands. Among the rest of the tribes the men only wear them as ornaments for the dances.

[286] In Nheengatú they are called tapacúra, and in Tukano yuxtá-seri. It is a band of delicate and curious weave, made of caroá fiber, most of the time, colored yellow or red. One is applied on each leg, a little below the knee. In many cases it is woven without any pieces added, and, thus, when, due to the person's growth, it starts to be too tight, they cut it off.

They assert that its purpose is to thicken the legs.

[177] d) Earrings. Nowadays one only sees earrings (in Nheengatú nambí-purá, in Tukano yoxsasé) obtained from the civilized, or, in place of them, small necklaces of glass beads.